

*Don't forget [Career Expo](#) this week!*

*January's full moon (Thursday) is called the [Wolf Moon](#).*

# BIOBEAT

Jan 25, 2021

*Want to brush up on your lab skills **IN PERSON??** [Sign up](#) for one of the lab workshops this week!*

## *The key to making groupwork work*

Chances are, this semester you're going to have a groupwork assignment. Does this strike fear in your heart? Maybe you get to select your group or maybe it's chosen for you, but somewhere in your journey at MRU, you'll have good and bad experiences with groupwork. And your professors have heard all the problems - "Person A never shows up to meetings," "Person B doesn't meet deadlines and if they do, their work isn't good enough," "Person C doesn't contribute and doesn't deserve the same grade as the rest of the group." So with all these problems with your group members, what is the key to having a functional group? You are.

Throughout your career, you'll have to work in groups and your professors often assign groupwork to help you learn these skills. No matter where you are though, you'll find a range of personality types and competencies, and you'll have to make it work. You can't control what any of your teammates do but you can change your own attitude and how you respond to whatever situations arise. It boils down to one thing — Ask not what your team can do for you, ask what you can do for your team.

- If a teammate is struggling with timelines, be proactive and ask what they need to get it done.
- If a teammate's work isn't up to par, remember that peer editing is a vital component to any group project. It's the team's job to make the project as



strong as possible. Help out by editing and making suggestions. Sometimes people struggle to know how to make something better.

- If you notice a teammate being left out socially, help them feel part of the team. They'll be more willing to contribute and everyone will be happier.
- If you notice that a teammate keeps getting talked over or their ideas aren't being heard, specifically ask for their opinion and see what you can do to bring everyone's voice into the mix.

In the end, remember that at some point in your career, **you** will be the weak link in the team. Maybe you'll be the least experienced person when you get hired for a job, or you have a group project in your weakest subject, or an unpredictable life event derails your best intentions. When it happens, and it will, you'll hope that your teammates treat you with understanding, respect, compassion, and support.

## NEW IN BIOLOGY THIS WEEK...

### *Butterfly flight mystery explained*

Butterflies have large, broad wings relative to their body size so how they execute their fluttery flight wasn't clear until [researchers studied butterflies flying in wind tunnels](#). They found that the wings' upward stroke creates an air pocket so that when the wings clap together, the air is forced behind and propels the butterfly forward. The downstroke prevents them from falling to earth.

### *Cormac, the llama, produces COVID antibodies*

[Researchers isolated tiny antibodies](#) (nanobodies) from Cormac after immunizing him with the COVID spike protein. Camelids (camels, llamas, and alpacas) produce nanobodies that are like the tips of human "Y"-shaped antibodies. Nanobodies are more stable and cheaper to produce than regular antibodies, and can be inhaled to coat the lungs to potentially protect against COVID-19.

*It's finally winter outside, time to embrace the snow.*